

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
Children's Alternative Treatment Program (\$1,370,407 grant)

The Children's Alternatives Treatment (CAT) project is designed to strengthen the county's assessment capabilities and expand evidence-based mental health resources for youth entering the juvenile justice system. It is linked to existing Disproportionate Minority Contact and other efforts in three areas that have the highest juvenile probation rates and child welfare needs: the Iron Triangle area of Richmond (West County), the Bay Point Community (East County), and the Monument Corridor in Concord (Central County).

Spearheading this effort is the CAT Team, which is comprised of a licensed mental health professional (team leader), three probation officers (each with a specialized caseload), a Parent Partner (paraprofessional who has, or had, children in the justice or mental health system) as well as education and health staff. If the current screening protocol (i.e., the MAYSI-2) triggers the need for further, more detailed assessments, or if the Juvenile Court or probation officers request more detailed assessments, CATT will be responsible for conducting comprehensive assessments and/or collecting collateral information. The result is a full and coordinated interagency profile of juvenile justice system youth.

With the goal of diverting youth from institutional settings, the CAT Team will coordinate with community-based treatment organizations to provide intensive family-focused services and specialized probation supervision. Depending upon the needs of the youth and his/her family, services are provided through one of the following evidence-based models: Multidimensional Family Therapy (or other intensive family therapy- Functional Family Therapy, Multisystemic Therapy, etc.), Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care, or Wraparound. The county estimates that up to 140 families will receive mental health treatment and support services through this project.

Project Director: Sandy Marsh, MFCC
(925) 646-2224 smarsh@hsd.cccounty.us